



### SUMMARY

Last year, RNLI lifeguards came to the aid of 15,957 people in 13,591 separate incidents. One of the strategies at the core of their success is an education programme designed to prevent problems by helping people understand how to stay safe at the coast, from understanding rip tides to reading safety flags.

Ross MacLeod is the Beach Safety Programmes Manager at RNLI headquarters in Poole. He manages RNLI's summer safety campaign and oversees the design and delivery of courses aimed at young people. When Ross heard of TurningPoint, he immediately realised the potential to gauge awareness of pupils during their 'Hit the Surf' course.

The Hit the Surf course is a hands-on day where pupils from around the country come to meet the lifeguards and learn about the work that they do. The day starts in a classroom on Sandbanks beach where Ross and team use props, flipcharts and presentations to gauge the group's existing knowledge of the issues they are about to explore. Pupils then go for a beach walk to spot local hazards and look at the equipment used by lifeguards. The excitement then ramps up as pupils enter the water to learn how to best handle dangerous situations. The course closes with a classroom plenary and certificate ceremony.

### SOLUTION

Ross explains why he felt TurningPoint would make a difference to the course. "This is a fun-packed session so the pupils are often boisterous, because they are away from school for the day. There's no getting away from the fact that it can be a challenge to get them on task and answering our questions first thing in the morning. It's also tricky getting them to be honest about what they know or what they might be struggling with. I hoped TurningPoint would give us an accurate view of what they really understood which is important, because the content of the course saves lives."

Ross truly appreciated TurningPoint's simple set up and seamless build into the day's content. The software didn't interfere with the finely honed structure of the course. A standard classroom voting system would require a computer to collect results. This of course would be perfectly suited for the classroom starter activities and the plenary session, but irrelevant while the pupils were on the beach exploring the environment.

With Turning Technologies' ResponseCard Anywhere receiver, instructors can ask questions in the field without any preparation. This receiver allows pupils to use their handsets from any location – from experiments in the school garden to full-blown field trips. Moreover, since the teacher needn't prepare in advance, everything becomes much more agile – allowing groups to respond to questions about events or make observations as they happen.

### OUTCOMES

The implementation outcomes are best said by Ross himself. He explains why outdoor use and agility are important to the success of this course, "When I first heard I could take the voting activity outside I was surprised. I was expecting to use the technology in the classroom and then leave it behind when we went outdoors. On the beach, the number of opportunities for pupils to become distracted rises exponentially so it's quite a challenge making sure everyone is on task and learning as we go. The outdoors section of the course is also the trickiest to plan in detail. One day we may see hazardous weather conditions and another day we'll see somebody swimming irresponsibly. The on-the-fly nature of ResponseCard Anywhere allowed us to work very naturally with the changing environment."

When asked how the technology worked, he explains, "TurningPoint worked as I expected and ResponseCard Anywhere really made a difference to my ability to measure pupil understanding both inside the classroom and out. From the starter activities in the classroom to the outdoor work in the afternoon, TurningPoint worked perfectly as an enhancement to our course. It was much easier to see when the pupils were paying attention and what they had learned. The pupils really loved the course and the energy levels were higher than I expected. Keeping everyone on board was a breeze!"

With TurningPoint being so well suited for classroom use, it can be easily dismissed as a solution for other uses. However, schools across the country often discover extra uses for this technology such as voting and evaluations at the administrative level. This was no exception to RNLI. After the 'Hit the Surf' course, Ross and his colleagues could see that TurningPoint would be invaluable in their 'post-season wash-up'. This is where lifeguards from all over the country come together to discuss their experiences in the previous season, with the ultimate aim at improving the charity's success.